

**In the Specification**

Please amend the paragraph that appears at page 3, line 10 to page 4, line 2, as follows.

A technology known as Information Based Indicia (IBI) has been developed as a means for verifying the validity of a paper-based item bearing the IBI. The United States Postal Service is working on a project with third parties called the Information Based Indicia Program (IBIP). Information about IBIP can be found on the U.S. Postal Service web site at <http://www.usps.gov/IBIP>. When used in connection with the U.S. Postal Service Project, the IBI is printed on an envelope and conveys evidence that the postage has been paid and contains mail processing data requirements as well as security-related data elements. The indicia is made up of human-readable information as well as a two-dimensional bar code with the following information: zip code; destination delivery point, software ID, ascending register; descending register; algorithm ID; device ID; date of mailing; postage; digital signature; rate category; reserve field; indicia version number; and certificate serial number.